

WCRC Minutes

February 5, 2003

Intro of members: JB Alexander, Creede; Jeff Graves, Colorado Div. Minerals and Geology; Leigh Ann Vradenburg, Watershed Coordinator; Zeke Ward, Chairman WCRC; Joe Burkett, Creede; Mark Walker, CDPHE; Kathleen Reilly, CDPHE; Les Dobson, USDA/FS; Don Gant, Creede.

Approval of minutes: JB Alexander noted that in the January minutes, Intro of members it should read "Laura Coppock, USFWS" and not USFS. Motion to approve the revised January minutes was made by Don Gant; second made by JB Alexander. Motion carried.

Additions/corrections to the agenda: Zeke Ward suggested that the order of the agenda be revised to allow those topics concerning Les Dobson to come near the beginning of the meeting.

In-Kind: Forms were provided in hard copy for volunteers to track time and other expenses. Leigh Ann encouraged monthly submission of these forms so that records could be kept current.

Old business:

Airport Corner VCUP: Mark Walker informed the committee that he had been trying to work with the Airport Corner subcommittee to review the adjustments/amendments to the VCUP. The VCUP now addresses that an environmental covenant will be attached to the deed if John Parker ever decides to sell the property. Mr. Parker also had further analyses conducted, which designated 73,000 yds³ instead of the original 38,000 yds³ to be consolidated. Mark indicated that there still needed to be some clarification of the dust management that will be done on the site.

Zeke updated the committee about the progress in terms of the Fairgrounds Association. Brian Setliff, an intern with Burns, Figa, and Will has volunteered to assist the Association in getting a Prospective Purchaser Agreement for the property that they will be acquiring from Mr. Parker. At some point in the future, the committee may have access to Mr. Setliff to assist them with seeking Brownfields funding for work in stream restoration in the lower floodplain. Mark emphasized that the City or we would have to have title of that land before we could proceed. Mark also suggested that a good starting point for Mr. Setliff would be to define the rules and regulations regarding Brownfields and report on the projects that got funded in the first round of awards.

New business:

2003 Site reclamation planning: Kathleen reported that almost everything was ready to go in terms of the 319 portion of the funding; we are just waiting on Congress. The Sampling and Analysis Plan needs to be reviewed again for any necessary changes in terms of waste rock and episodic sampling. Leigh Ann and JB will review the SAP and contact the TAC about any changes. Kathleen said that we need to designate a Quality Assurance Officer for this project to ensure the data were collected following protocol. Zeke asked if JB could be that person because of his scientific background and his involvement in all committee activities. We will look into this further.

Zeke said that we need to construct a check-off list for each of the sites to indicate the collection of all preliminary data. This list should include water samples, sediment/waste rock samples, photo points, acreage, and narrative descriptions. Pictures should be taken during the process to document changes on site. We need to make a flow chart with target dates for attainment of all preliminary information.

Kathleen asked how long the committee planned to conduct follow-up investigations on the sites. Zeke indicated that it would be at least two years, and that we would continue as long as needed to ensure that the integrity of the reclamation efforts had been maintained. Kathleen asked if there was an inventory of the plant life on the sites. Les said that he would send a copy of the inventories that the Forest Service had done on their sites. Zeke indicated that we should ask the NRCS and the USFWS if they saw a need for any additional prior inventories.

Solomon Park: Les said that the area below the Solomon is degraded, but we have not as yet discovered a discreet source. Zeke indicated that the committee should direct the TAC to draft up a plan for a test pit and soil samples in the Solomon Park area. That would give a better indication if there is anything at the site which would be considered hazardous to the environment. Motion to give TAC a directive to develop a plan for a test pit and soil samples made by JB Alexander; second made by Don Gant. Motion carried. There was a suggestion to make sure Bob Kirkham was involved in this design.

JB asked if the work in Windy Gulch by Homestake was finished. Les indicated that it was and that they must meet agricultural water quality standards. JB asked what those numbers were, and Les said that he would send them to the committee.

Coordinator's report:

Leigh Ann informed the committee that the re-veg subcommittee would be meeting on February 20th at 9am at the NRCS office. This meeting will be held to discuss what if anything the subcommittee wanted to do for field trials this spring.

The San Luis Valley Resource Conservation and Development group will hold their annual meeting on February 18th in Alamosa. Leigh Ann will present an update of the committee's activities.

Leigh Ann and Zeke gave a presentation to the Rio Grande Water Conservation Board about the past, current, and future activities of the WCRC. Zeke asked the board for \$10,000 for coordinator's salary and the board voted unanimously in support.

In the past, Mike Wireman has offered the services of the EPA lab for analyzing water samples for the committee. Although there has not been a formal decision by the committee regarding this option, Mike requested a placeholder for 20 samples at the lab pending further discussion. This will be covered at the March meeting.

Leigh Ann received a general format for TMDL's from Andrew Ross with CDPHE. She offered to make copies for anyone that was interested. Further discussions regarding TMDL's will be conducted in March.

Leigh Ann looked into options for a new desktop computer. She noted that we can install most of the old software on a new computer and therefore will only need to purchase updated operating software (Windows XP). She had contacted Dell and was informed that they did not give discounts to non-profit organizations. She also determined that the WCRC was not eligible for HP's discount program because the committee could be considered as an environmental group. Don Gant said that he would look into any discount options through IBM and would inform Leigh Ann. Leigh Ann discussed the components of the system she was considering and asked what the ceiling should be for costs. Motion to fund the purchase of a computer up to \$2,200 made by Joe Burkett; second made by JB Alexander. Motion carried. Leigh Ann will send final specifications to Zeke before purchasing.

Leigh Ann suggested that the committee pursue the National Forest Foundation Community Assistance Program to fund a new outreach component of the project. These funds would be used to purchase a PowerPoint projector and screen and to fund Leigh Ann to present more frequently to local groups and schools. There was an informal decision to pursue this grant.

Zeke informed the committee that Bill Simon with the Animas watershed group requested a letter of support to be a pilot project for the Good Samaritan legislation. Motion for Zeke to draft a letter of support on behalf of the WCRC made by Joe Burkett; second made by JB Alexander. Motion carried.

Leigh Ann said that she had received a press release from the Colorado Watershed Assembly regarding the new check-off option on the Colorado income tax forms. This check-off is for the Colorado Watershed Protection Fund and will be used as a competitive grant for watershed groups like the WCRC. Leigh Ann added information about the WCRC and the San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council to the press release and submitted it to the Valley Courier and the Mineral County Miner.

New business (continued):

Underground update: Zeke briefly summarized the TAC's discussion regarding the recent findings of Ken Wyley and Jerry Wintz. The committee voted on the following topics:

1. A work order for Ken and Jerry to improve access at Daylight Corner, the Commodore Shaft, and at the Javelin so that better samples and flow measurements could be obtained. Motion to approve the work order for \$5,600 made by Kathleen Reilly; second made by JB Alexander. Motion carried.
2. Zeke would like the committee to submit a formal request to ASARCO to find, copy, and mail any files regarding underground work done through Creede Exploration. Although the fee for this research was not known, Zeke suggested a ceiling of \$500. Joe Burkett suggested a ceiling of \$1,000. Motion to submit a formal request to ASARCO for records with a fee of up to \$1,000 make by JB Alexander; second made by Joe Burkett. Motion carried.
3. Zeke suggested that the committee add several sites to their next underground sampling event for water sampling and flow measurements. These sites would include the Nelson tunnel above interaction with the Wooster, the Commodore shaft, Daylight Corner, and at depth in the Berkshire. This was informally agreed upon.

May sampling: Leigh Ann asked the committee if we should conduct a sampling event in May in conjunction with River Watch. She said that she would suggest at least the sites that had been sampled the last two years, and asked if there were any additions. JB said that he would like to do some more intensive sampling in East Willow, perhaps three or four extra sites. Leigh Ann said that for now she would submit an estimate to Barb and the committee could discuss specifics in March or April.

Earth day sampling: Leigh Ann said that she had discussed the possibility of cleaning up debris on Willow Creek in conjunction with Earth Day in April. Although the weather might dictate that cleanup be postponed or occur primarily in the lower floodplain, it would be an excellent opportunity for the committee to work with other groups in the Valley for coordination and advertising. Leigh Ann will continue to look into coordinating with these groups and with the City and county for donations of equipment time.

The next meeting will be March 5, 2003.

Meeting Adjourned 3:50 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Leigh Ann Vradenburg